

## HIGHER EDUCATION

Enrollments in our State-supported institutions of higher education continue to increase rapidly. In the fall of 1958, a total of 29,500 full-time students were enrolled in our nine State-supported colleges and in the three branches of the University. By the middle 1960's, we shall have an enrollment of about 37,000, and by 1969 an enrollment of 50,000 or more.

Notwithstanding these prospective increases in numbers, North Carolina still ranks in a regrettably low position in the Nation in the ratio of college enrollment. For the Nation as a whole, 31% of the college-age group attends college. In North Carolina, only 17% of this group is enrolled in college.

We should not, of course, attempt to enroll more college students just to attain a more favorable statistical position. Nor should we maintain colleges for students who want to go to college simply because "it is the thing to do." And we should be sure that our colleges are offering opportunities for a genuine higher education.

This leads us to the subject of admission standards for our State-supported institutions of higher education. I do not suggest any blind and unreasoned adherence to an admission test as a sole criterion to judge admission to an institution of higher education. Rather, admission tests should constitute a useful tool. They should provide an objective appraisal, both of our students and of our high schools from which they graduate, and proper tests in colleges will go a long way toward raising the standards in our high schools.

You probably know that since the fall term of 1957 pre-admission tests have been used as a criterion for admission of students in the Consolidated University. I compliment our University leadership for this step and I would like to see every State-supported institution of higher education announce that, effective no later than the fall term of 1961, pre-admission tests will be required of all applicants for purposes of guidance and measurement of aptitudes and qualifications of the student. I hope the General Assembly will seriously interest itself in this matter.

In the ten-year period 1947-1957, appropriations by the General Assembly of North Carolina for capital improvements in our State-supported institutions of higher education amounted to \$105,000,000. In this decade, enrollments in these institutions increased 16% from 24,300 in 1947 to 28,400 in 1957. Recently the Board of Higher Education completed a study of probable capital needs for our colleges for the ten-year period 1959 through 1969, a decade in which enrollments are expected to increase 66%, from about 30,000 to about 50,000. The Board has concluded that the reasonable needs of our institutions during the next ten-year period can be met with a substantially less capital expenditure than was appropriated for the 1947-1957 decade. The capital improvements approach suggested by the Board, and for the most part approved by the institutions, involves renovation and alteration of present facilities, a moderate increase in instructional and dormitory facilities, an increased use of present space, an increased use of facilities in the summer months, and provision for the expansion of community colleges. In my budget message, I shall have specific recommendations for a capital improvement program for our higher education institutions.

During the past two years we have had notable advances in the important field of community colleges. Colleges in Asheville, Charlotte and Wilmington are now fully qualified under the Community College Act of 1957, and the State appropriations for capital improvements at these colleges have already been more than matched by bond issues approved in local elections.